



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at the Park and Recreation Administrative Office Building, located at 5841 Brookshire Blvd., Charlotte, NC on April 9, 2019 at 6 p.m.

PRC MINUTES

April 9, 2019

ATTENDANCE

PRC Present: Heidi Pruess, Chair
Rick Winiker, Vice-Chair
Peter Engels, Executive Secretary
Sterling Martin
Brian Cox
Doug Burnett
Paul Freestone
Ann Harrison
Mark Loflin
Alesha Brown
Rufus Kearney
Sandy Barnett

PRC Absent: Blanche Penn

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Chair, Heidi Pruess, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Welcome and Introductions:

Chair, Heidi Pruess, welcomed all to the April 9, 2019 Park and Recreation Commission meeting. Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

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New PRC Introduction: Alesha Brown – Central 1

Guest: Cory Crawford – Citizen Capital Budget Advisory Committee

Public Appearance – Special Presentations

Park and Recreation Marketing Presentation – Kerry Garner – Marketing Coordinator

Kerry Garner, Market Coordinator for the Park and Recreation Department, shared the goal and areas of focus for the Department's 2019 Marketing Proposal. More detail on what was covered can be viewed here: [Marketing Slide](#)

- **Goal:** To better tell our story in a clear and concise way to our customers and the general public in a way that supports our department's mission and vision.
- **Areas of Focus:**
 - Community Engagement & Awareness
 - Brand Strategy and Standards
 - Marketing, PR/Communications and Promotions
 - Internal Communications and Culture
 - Sponsorships and Partnerships

Awards and Recognition: None

Standing AC Reports and Appointments

Aquatics: None

Athletics: Commissioner Martin reported that the Athletics Advisory Council met on March 26. This meeting included Skate Park advocates, a park amenity that should be included in the new Park and Recreation Master Plan. Ashton Counts is now the staff liaison for the Athletics Advisory Council.

The Athletics AC Report can be viewed here: [Athletics - March 26, 2019](#)

Cooperative Extension: Commissioner Winiker reported that one of the main issues agreed on by this Advisory Council is recruitment of new members. Kristin Davis is working on getting the Master Food program off the ground and Steve Capobianco does a great job with the Master Gardner program. These programs need to be better publicized.

- **Advisory Council Flyer:** Commissioner Harrison and Commissioner Kearney have been working on putting together a flyer to better tell about the various advisory councils and the topics addressed by each council along with direction on how to get involved. Commissioners Harrison and Kearney will work with Marketing Coordinator, Kerry Garner, to publish a flyer that will meet the guidelines for marketing material.

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Central: Commissioner Engels reported that the Central Advisory Council met on March 18. This council continues to seek information about the sponsorship policy used by the County and Park and Recreation, especially around size and nature of corporate branding. An additional meeting has been scheduled for a working session on this topic before taking it out to other councils.

The Central AC Report can be viewed here: [Central – March 18, 2019](#)

Golf: Commissioner Loflin, recently appointed to the Golf Advisory Council, reported that the last Golf meeting was in February, but shared that this council is a very active and seasoned committee. Commissioner Loflin will be touring the golf courses and looks forward to sharing at future PRC meetings.

The Golf AC Report can be viewed here: [Golf – February 19, 2019](#)

Greenways: Commissioner Freestone reported that discussion at the March 11 Greenway Advisory Council meeting centered around greenway connectivity in the Northern Towns and the Cross-Charlotte Trail. Cornelius is doing a nice job of getting trail on the map that will soon be usable. Dirtways, a topic at the recent BOCC Environment Stewardship Committee meeting, continues to be discussed, particularly around this pilot program's limitations:

- Maintenance and staffing for maintenance
- LUESA and Stormwater policies that affect putting Dirtways in place
- Possibility of Dirtway trail volunteers

The Greenway AC report can be viewed here: [Greenways – March 11, 2019](#)

Motion was made by Commissioner Winiker to appoint **Dyrre Osborne** to an unexpired term on the Greenway Advisory Council, expiring June 2021, which was seconded by Commissioner Burnett and approved unanimously.

North: Commissioner Freestone reported that the North Advisory Council received an update on the Eastway Regional Recreation Center.

South: Commissioner Burnett reported that the South AC has not met, but that this Advisory Council has a very engaged and motivated citizen group advocating for Mason Wallace Park.

Sr. Citizen: Commissioner Winiker reported that the Sr. Citizen Advisory Council has established a meeting schedule that works with the members and staff. Commissioner Winiker shared that he has learned about the role of the council, the need for continued recruitment and the upcoming senior games.

Stewardship: Commissioner Pruess reported that the Stewardship Advisory Council is looking to begin lining up their meetings with those of the North, South and Central to share the

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Stewardship AC story.

PRC Chair Report

Park Stories: Chair Pruess shared that because of the recent PRC report to the BOCC Environmental Stewardship Committee, the PRC have been asked to participate in the public speaking portion of the April 16 BOCC meeting and share “stories” behind the data. All were asked to look for these story opportunities in their regions, advisory councils, neighborhoods and work and invite folk to attend and share at the BOCC meeting. The Park and Recreation Commission, as a group, will have 10 minutes to speak and individuals will have 3 minutes to speak.

Director’s Report

Fees and Charges – Terri Stowers, Division Director of Community and Recreation Center Services

Terri Stowers made a presentation to answer questions from the Park and Recreation Commission around how the Department comes up with programs and the associated fees. The presentation covered:

- The Program Development Process
 - Program Ideas
 - Ideas come from citizen input, the 3 pillars of NRPA, program workers, Master Plan, community surveys, trends and other facilities within Meck. County.
 - Core Program Areas
 - Developing a Program
 - Program Proposal
 - Lifecycle of an Activity
 - Program Fees
 - Program proposals include a program cost analysis and the program pricing guidelines help determine how much to charge based on staff time, materials and contractor cost.
 - Program Pricing Guidelines
 - Cost Recovery:
 - YOUTH
 - 80 – 100%
 - 60 – 90% in Limited Resource Communities (75% of Mecklenburg County medium household income)
 - ADULTS
 - 100%
 - 80 – 100% in Limited Resource Communities
 - CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES
 - 60 – 100%

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- SR. CITIZENS
 - 70 – 100%
 - Program Implementation and Evaluation
- Data on Programming by Category
- Data on Programming by Age Groups

Program Fee Facts:

- 64.5% of P&R Programs in FY2019 were free
- 11.3% of P&R Programs in FY2019 were less than \$5.00
- UNCC and Sharon Towers Partnership – Pays for free fitness classes in 7 of our recreation centers, 5 days a week
- 6 free “safe play sites” summer camps. Advertised to the respective community and includes free breakfast and lunch and planned activities
- 253 free book bags

The PRC expressed their appreciation for the information provided by Terri’s presentation and look forward to advocating for needed programming. The PRC encouraged Terri to share what they do with the public.

Terri shared that one area of advocacy would be in the form of scholarship money for the hard cost associated with summer camps and athletics. For three years the Department received \$30,000 from Blue Cross Blue Shield. All this money was used for camp/athletic scholarships. This presentation can be viewed here: [Program Development Process](#)

Four Mile Creek Trailhead Plaza Concept Design – Bert Lynn

Bert Lynn, Division Director of Capital Planning Services, shared information on the Placemaking Program at the Four Mile Creek Trailhead Plaza. This program by the City of Charlotte Urban Design Center is the process of making the local community identity visible while creating more vibrant community spaces. The Four Mile Creek Trailhead Plaza was selected as one of the spaces and will include:

- DecoMark Medallion
- Rocking Chairs
- Pressure Washed Concrete Art
- Painted Trashcan and Benches
- Painted Crosswalk (possible future phase)

PRC concerns centered around safe access and cost. The City of Charlotte will be funding these projects. Information can be viewed here: [Placemaking at Four Mile Creek Trailhead Plaza](#)

Firestone Park

Director Jones gave an update on a Charlotte Neighborhood Improvement Project (CNIP)

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involving Firestone Park. Early conversations in 2015/2016 revolved around sidewalk improvements and “eyes on the park” development. In 2016/2017 they talked about connectivity and later talked about subdividing lots around the park perimeter, at which time the Department’s philosophy of no net loss of open space was reinforced. Since that time a road has been planned through the park and plans have come forward from the City of Charlotte showing development on park property. The Department is not in favor of this plan and continues to stand behind their no net loss of open space philosophy. The PRC are not in favor of the proposed plan by the City of Charlotte/CNIP for Firestone Park and asked that they be kept informed in order to advocate and advance the notion of not losing any park property. Maps showing the proposed road and development at Firestone Park can be viewed here: [Firestone Park/CNIP](#)

Fees and Charges Presentation

Director Jones shared the Department’s [Fee Reduction Guidelines](#) and reviewed the FY20 Fees and Charges presentation made to the BOCC on April 9. Director Jones asked for endorsement by the PRC of the proposed fees and charges changes.

The presentation covered proposed fee changes to membership passes, daily admissions, birthday party packages and multi-booking discounts for the Sportsplex at Matthews. This presentation can be viewed here: [Park and Recreation FY20 Proposed Fees and Charges Changes](#)

Discussion followed and included the following:

A motion was made by Commissioner Winiker for interested PRC to meet as a committee before the next PRC meeting to further discuss the fees and charges presented and prepare a slate of PRC comments to include with the fees and charges which was seconded by Commissioner Brown.

Discussion followed resulting in an **amended motion** by Commissioner Burnett to accept the fees and charges as presented with the caveat of seeking and gathering citizen input with a 6-month deadline, which was seconded by Commissioner Loflin.

Commissioner Winiker **withdrew his original motion** and suggested the amended motion by Commissioner Burnett include the understanding that the Park and Recreation Department does not have adequate staff to undertake the citizen survey process and does not have a communicable way and/or methodology for awarding scholarships for memberships/programs.

Commissioner Loflin inquired if there should be a sunset provision included should the Fees and Charges get overwhelming disapproval from the public.

Chair Pruess said that Fees and Charges are reviewed annually.

Director Jones said the Department could provide the PRC with information on scholarships

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available and where those scholarships are going. He also said a question regarding fees and charges could be added to the customer survey.

An amended motion was made by Commissioner Cox to endorse the fees and charges as presented contingent on receiving an implementation plan from the Department.

Commissioner Brown asked for information to understand how the membership fees go from \$48 to \$65 and community garden fees are eliminated. Director Jones said he would be able to provide that information.

The amended motion was unanimously approved.

Consent

Motion was made by Commissioner Winiker to approve all consent items, including the PRC minutes of March 23, 2019, which was seconded by Commissioner Loflin and approved unanimously.

PRC Reports and Requests

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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